

**ABSTRACT**

A method of forming a conversion layer on a metallic surface and a composition usable in the method are provided. The composition is an aqueous solution comprising a source of tungstate ions and a soluble material comprising zirconium. The method provides a conversion coating on a surface that can then be painted or otherwise treated. The conversion coatings of the present invention are minimally affected by heating and/or baking, unlike chromate conversion coatings of the prior art.